1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

approaching nubility—receive some advantage through the connivance of the matrons. To a considerable extent in the matter of sustentation, and to a dominant degree in the matter of apparelling, the distribution of values is affected by a highly significant (though by no means peculiar) humanitarian notion of inherent individual rights—i. e., every member of the family or clan is entitled to necessary food and raiment, and it is the duty of every other person to see that the need is supplied. The stress of this duty is graded partly by proximity (so that, other things equal, it begins with the nearest person), but chiefly by standing and responsibility in the group (which again are reckoned as equivalents of age, whereby it becomes the business of the first at the feast to see that enough is left to supply all below him; and this duty passes down the line in such wise as to protect the interests of the helpless infant, and even of the tribal gnaw-for-naught or hanger on, who may gather crumbs and lick bones within limits fixed by the tribal consensus. Beyond these limits lies outlawry; and this status arises and passes into the tribal recognition in various ways: Kolusio was outlawed for consorting with aliens, and Mashem narrowly missed the same fate at several stages of his career; the would-be grooms who fail in their moral tests are ostracized and at least semioutlawed, and range about like rogue elephants, approved targets for any arrow, until they perish through the multiplied risks of solitude, or until some brilliant opportunity for display of prowess or generosity brings reinstatement; deformed offspring are classed as outside the human pale, even when the deformity is defined rather by occult associations than by physical features; abnormal and persistent indolence, too serious for scorn and ostracism to cure, may also outpass the tribal toleration; and, as indicated by Mashem's guarded expressions and slight additional data, disease, mental aberration, and decrepitude are allied with indolence and deemed sufficient reason for excluding the persistently helpless from the tribal solidarity, and hence from recognized humanity—and the fate of the outlaw, even if nothing more severe than abandonment in the desert, is usually sure and swift. The entire customs of outlawry among the Seri are singularly like those of gregarious animals, including especially kine and swine in domestication. Now, studied equity in the distribution of necessaries might seem to be allied to thrift; but it is noteworthy that this is not so among the Seri, who take thought for one another but not for the morrow, who seem to have no conception of storage—save an incipient one in connection with water and the repulsive notion underlying the "second harvest"), and who habitually gorge everything in sight until their stomachs and gullets are packed—and then waste the fragments.

The division of labor which affects proprietary interests is undoubtedly affected in turn by the militant habit of the tribe and by the frequent decimation of the warriors. In general, the adult males limit their work to fighting and fishing, with occasional excursions into the hunt-

7: Marroquin E-5 (1955) 1957 NU3. Seri NU31

POPULATION ABLE TO WORK
(between 11 and 65 years)

Men, 74 or 69% of the masculine population.
Women, 76 or 70% of the feminine population.

We can add that, at least as far as the male population is concerned, the figure of 69% with a potential work capacity is equivalent, in general terms, to the percentage of the population economically active, since one of the singular characteristics of the Seri population is the fact that they constitute a community fully occupied: all the men of working age have a place set aside in the fishing activities; this is an advantageous position for increasing economic development of the tribe. With relation to the women the situation is not the same, since the majority of girls of marriageable age carry on very few productive activities; it could be said that economic responsibility begins with matrimony.

If it is true that all the Seri men are fishermen, it is also true that there is the beginning of some specialization of jobs, which are carried on complementing or as an accessory to the principal occupation. Thus we have among the men:

Carpenters, constructors of *piraguas* (a kind of canoe)	6
Medicine men	14
Farmers	2

And among the women:

Seamstresses	4
Farmers	1
Midwives	22

The relatively high number of medicine men and midwives should not be surprising; Seri popular medicine is very well known and depends principally on magical propitiation and since the magic powers are acquired in a variety of ways, including dreams, and the healing rites are, on the other hand, very simple, it is not strange that medicine men should abound. As for the midwives, it can be said that every woman who has undergone the experience of childbirth feels herself able to help at a birth; nevertheless, it is said that the more experienced women are those best able to take care of those giving birth.

Problems which should be attended to

In addition to the sanitary problem mentioned above, mention should also be made of the problem of agriculture, linked with the necessity for supplying food to an Indian population which since economically it depends principally on fishing, needs to complement its diet with agricultural products to achieve a better one. In close relation

7: Marroquin E-5 (1955) 1957 NU31 Seri NU31

with this problem is the lack of legal title to the lands which the Seris own in fact but which legally belong to the nation.

Insofar as the economic problem, it is necessary to better the fishing techniques, doing away with old process of obtaining the catch through dynamite explosions. Finally, as Dr. Marroquin says, the fact should be noted that the Seris on passing from the nomadic economy to exchange economy lack the necessary knowledge to achieve success in their operations within the national and international market.

It is thus necessary to take care of these and other problems, to save this Indian group from complete extinction, succeeding on the other hand in raising their living conditions, making of them citizens capable of contributing to the progress of the State of Sonora and the Republic of Mexico as a whole.

NEW DIRECTOR OF THE SUMMER INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTICS IN MEXICO

For the next two years the Director of the Summer Institute of Linguistics in Mexico will be Dr. Benjamin Elson. Dr. Elson first came to México in 1942 and began linguistic field work among the Sierra Popoluca Indians of the State of Veracruz. Sierra Popoluca has been the principal object of his linguistic studies since that time, and various articles have resulted from these researches. He took his degree from Cornell University with the thesis "Sierra Popoluca Morphology". He has on other occasions served as Associate Director of the Institute in Mexico.

The Associate Director will be Mr. H. J. Klassen. Mr. Klassen has done linguistic field work on Lowland Mixteco in the State of Oaxaca. He has served as Interim Director of the Institute on previous occasions.

VII ROUND TABLE OF ANTHROPOLOGY HELD IN THE CITY OF OAXACA FROM SEPTEMBER 1ST. TO 7TH.

During the month of September, the VII Round Table of Anthropology, dedicated to the study of the Indian cultures of Oaxaca, was held in the city of Oaxaca, capital of the state of the same name. Since at the present time there exists in this state a large proportion of Indians, and since during its pre-Hispanic past such important cultures as the Zapotec and Mixtec flourished there, the interest of this Round Table is evident.

Lack of space makes it impossible to present here a complete report of this anthropological meeting; therefore, we will limit our coverage to a summary of the most important points, taken from the Report of the recording secretary, Prof. Wigberto Jiménez Moreno. This report was made available to us through the kindness of Mrs. Carmen Cook de Leonard, Vice-President of the Center of Anthropological Investigations of Mexico. The complete version in English may be seen in the *Boletín* of the Center of Anthropological Investigations (Nº 1, Oct., 1957, pp. 43-49).

9:Malkin F-5 (1955-1955)1962 MU31 Seri MU31

XI

SUMMARY

* 825 [114] In 1956 (Malkin 1956:74) I published tables indicating the degree of economic exploitation of the animal world by the Seria. These tables were incomplete and also need corrections. Therefore below I am reproducing the revised version.

Class	Species Reported	Species Exploited	Percentage
Mammalia	21	9	40
Birds	24	6	25
Reptiles and Amphibia	25	17	68
Fishes	44	23	52
Molluscs	27	27	70
Crustacea	10	2	20
Insects	92	—	—
Miscellaneous	9	—	—
Totals	262	82	30

These figures show as yet remarkable degree of exploitation of the products of the sea and also of the reptiles with correspondingly lesser interest in the terrestrial animals in general. Of course, mere listing of animals does not tell the whole story. In the first place, it does not indicate the changes that took place nor does it suggest the relative importance of any group or species. Historically, the situation is different now. Out of nine species of mammals reported as eaten only six still figure out in the diet. The reduction is even more striking in birds where only three are admittedly eaten and two of these only furtively. More yet, only 12 species of marine molluscs out of 27 are eaten while the rest get discarded. All this is tied up then with the changes in the economy, with the importation and increase of the trade foods and goods and also with increasing preoccupation with the commercial fishing at the expense of hunting and gathering.

262 177

262 Individually, by far the most important in the Seri diet and economy are the fishes with half a dozen large commercially lucrative species leading the list. Next come the marine turtles and following these for the third place tie the molluscs, the mammals (lagomorphs, bighorn and peccary) and probably the rest of the reptiles of which the rattlers are probably most important by volume. Insects do not figure any longer in the Seri economy in any way, although at one time they probably had some significance. On the other hand, while the food importance of the molluscs decreased immensely, their trade importance is on the upswing owing to the demand from the outside. Thus the basic changes in the Seri patterns of exploitation of animals has been a result largely of an outside stimulus.

[439] [177]

Fishing and Hunting

226 185 Fishing is practiced mostly to satisfy the immediate needs, of petty cash and food. Once these are satisfied, there is no incentive to fish until the need arises again.

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123 the flesh attached. This we roasted, or broiled, by standing it on
262 edge against two stakes in front of the fire. The breast was white and tender, somewhat like roast pig, but much more delicious.

262 The Seris cut off the great flippers, dug out the entrails, and
252 whenever there was a crack in the crowd of men, women and children, there was a dog lapping the blood and chewing a shred of meat before being driven off. Men, women and children tore off pieces of the tender
[251] meat and ate it raw. The blood which gathered in the hollow of the shell was baled out and saved in an olla.

A woman took out the coils of entrails, ripped them open with her finger, squeezed out the half-digested sea grass, which resembled closely-packed boiled greens, and rinsed them in the sea. The head
[251] was skillfully disjointed, and with flippers, entrails and liver, put up on the brush roof away from the sand and dogs.

Then began the feast; half the turtle being devoured immediately.
[264] To see Blanco, which name fits neither his complexion or character, gnaw the bone and tear away the raw flesh of a turtle flipper with his strong white teeth and cruel mouth, would not require much imagination to substitute the shin bone of a human being.

All parts of the sea turtle are utilized except the bones and portions of the head. The white, flexible under-shell is roasted and eaten, but how they can masticate and digest it is a mystery. I tried it and gave it up, as did all our party. It might have been a Goodyear tire, for all the impression we made on it, but even the Seri children
237 eat it. The carapace is broken into small pieces and dried out in an olla, and this yields a green oil. The shell is nearly one-half inch thick and filled with minute cells which carry oil. This oil is evidently a provision of nature to prevent barnacles and marine growths from attaching to the shell. This oil is poured into a previously cleaned section of intestine, fastened at one end, and then is bottled, ready for transportation or use.

The skin of the flippers is used for sandals. The broken pieces of carapace are also used for firing ollas. The shells are used for windbreaks, for receptacles for transporting household things on women's heads, and possibly for other needs. The stomachs are stretched, probably with sand, and when dried are used for transporting water, the same as we use a canteen.

185 The Seris are always improvident. They raise no cattle. They plant
261 nothing and the only crops they raise are children and dogs. They
[231] store no food away, eat when there is plenty, go hungry when there is
[231] nothing to eat. When they will eat raw turtle meat like animals, their
[262] taste is not refined. This is evidenced when they will eat a horse or burro dead, several days---scrape off the maggots to get a chance at it.